

**Preliminary Amendment
U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/565,784**

REMARKS

Claims 9, 11 and 12 have been amended in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is entered.

Claims 2-8, 14 and 16-18 are allowed.

Independent Claim 9, as amended, is to a junction block that has an inner cover having a horizontal plate and vertical walls crossing the horizontal plate, and a power block and connector blocks combined with the inner cover. Components such as circuit boards are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks. The power block and the connector blocks form at least a part of the outside of the junction block, and the combination of the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part with a guide part in a direction crossing the horizontal plate of the inner cover at right angles.

Independent Claim 11, as amended, is to a junction block that has an inner cover having a horizontal plate and vertical walls crossing the horizontal plate, and a power block and connector blocks combined with the inner cover. Components such as circuit boards are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks. The power block and the connector blocks form at least a part of the outside of the junction block. The combination of the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part with a guide part in a direction crossing the horizontal plate of the inner cover at right angles, and one of the connector blocks is combined with the inner cover, while the other connector

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block is combined with the power block.

Independent Claim 12, as amended, is to a junction block that has an inner cover having a horizontal plate and vertical walls crossing the horizontal plate, and a power block and connector blocks combined with the inner cover. Components such as circuit boards are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks. The power block and the connector blocks form at least a part of the outside of the junction block. The combination of the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part of the connector block or the power block into an engaging hole which communicates with a dead space in the power block or the connector block, respectively, in a direction crossing the horizontal plate of the inner cover at right angles.

In the previous Final Office Action, Claims 9, 11, 12, 13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiina et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,597,578) in view of Okabe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,375,517). Reconsideration and removal of these rejections are respectfully requested in view of the present claim amendments and the following remarks.

The Office Action alleges that Shiina et al. discloses a junction block having an inner cover (17) and a power block and connector blocks (12, 13, 14) combined with the inner cover (17), wherein components such as circuit boards are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks, wherein the power block and the connector blocks form the outside of the junction block, and the combination of the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part (17b) with a guide part (13c, 14c) in a direction crossing the inner cover (17) at right angles.

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The Office Action admits that Shiina et al. does not disclose the combination of the power block and the connector blocks wherein the inner cover is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part with a guide part in a direction crossing the horizontal plate of the inner cover at right angles. However, the Office Action further alleges that Okabe et al. discloses the combination of the block (2) and the block (3) is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part (13) with a guide part (12) in a direction crossing the horizontal plane at right angles.

Independent Claims 9, 11 and 12 are presently amended to include other walls of the inner cover, as described at page 19, line 22 to page 20, line 7 of the present specification. It is respectfully submitted that neither of the cited references show or suggest the now claimed inner cover having vertical walls crossing a horizontal plate.

In view of the amendments to Claims 9, 11 and 12, and the above remarks, removal of the present rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Claims 9, 11, 12, 13 and 15, as amended, are believed to be patentable and in condition for allowance in addition to Claims 2-8, 14 and 16-18, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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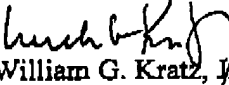
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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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